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But discarding this unscientific notion, it cannot be denied that they are the "younger" of the two. The stage of Realism, as represented by the former, must naturally have preceded that of Idealism, of which the Aryan alone is the proper type and expression. The Semitic use of the materialistic, "sensual," term for physiological and psychological phenomena must be older than the formation and common usage of the Aryan abstract term. The name for the outward tangible impression which must have everywhere been identical originally with that of the sensation or idea connected with it, has remained identical in the Semitic from its earliest stage to its final development. It is, in fact, this unity of idea and expression, which, above all other symptoms, forces us irresistably to place the Semitic into the front rank as regards "antiquity," such as we explained it; that is, of its having retained the closest likeness to some original form of human speech that preceded both the other family of language and itself.—*From Deutsch's Lit. Remains.*

➤CRITICAL ✧ NOTES.◀

"Time" in the Old Testament.—This "Note" is written for those who read the Old Testament in the English translation. The heading "Tense in Hebrew" would be more appropriate, but might be misleading. If the reader will open his Bible at Gen. XXIII., 11, he will read the words *I give thee* three times. In Abraham's reply (v. 13) occur the words *I will give thee*. If he will turn to Ruth, IV., 3, he will read, *Naomi . . . selleth a parcel of land*. Read also in Isa. IX., 6, *The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light*; and in Isa. XI., 9, *For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord*.

Now let it be noted that in the original the verbs which in these verses are rendered (1) *I give*, (2) *I will give*, (3) *selleth*, (4) *have seen*, (5) *shall be full* are in what is commonly called the *past* tense. It is undoubtedly true that the words "*I give*" in the first case and "*I will give*" in the second refer to the future, though immediate; in the third case we are confident that Naomi has not already sold her land, otherwise it would not still be for sale, at least by her; we shall all agree that the "light" referred to in Isa. IX., 6, is the Messianic time and still many hundred years in the future, although our translators have given us a literal rendering of the tense; the time in the future to which the words *shall be full* refer, is determined by the context. But in every case cited there is used in the Hebrew what is known as the *past* tense.

Now let the reader turn to Gen. II., 6. *But there went up a mist*; Ex. XV., 5, *the depths covered them*; XV., 1, *Then sang Moses*; Gen. VI., 4, *when the sons of God came in*; Isa. I., 21, *righteousness lodged in it*; Ps. I., 2, *and in his law doth he meditate*; Ex. I., 12, *But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew*. Let it be noted that in the case of every verb translated in these phrases the tense, in the original, is that which is usually called *future*. But how is this possible? The mist referred to *went up* before the creation of man. Moses *sang*, and the depths *covered* the hosts of Pharaoh thousands of years ago. In every case, except one, the thought is manifestly of the *past*. These cases bring fairly to our minds the question at issue, the use of the tense in Hebrew,—a question of interest not alone to the student of Hebrew, but to every one who would understand the Word of God.

There are two points worthy of notice: 1) The Hebrew has no "present" tense; 2) The so-called "past" and "future" tenses in Hebrew are fundamentally different from those in English, Latin or Greek. There is, what may be called, *order of time*; e. g., we say that a certain event is *past*, i. e., it took place at some date or time in the past, and so another event is to take place at some date in the future. We take our stand in the present and, in reference to every event, ask ourselves as to its *order*. Has it yet taken place or is it yet to take place?—the standpoint of consideration being the present. Or, the standpoint of consideration may be fixed by the narrative. In this way we characterize it as past or future. This is *order of time*. But there is also what may be called *kind of time*; e. g., we may contemplate an action as *beginning*, *incipient*, as *finished*, *completed*, or as *continuing*, *going on*. A writer may "wish to lay stress upon the moment at which an action begins, or upon the period over which it extends, or upon the fact of its being finished and done." We must distinguish between this way of contemplating an action, and the former one. The former method marks differences in *date*, or *order*; but the latter in *kind* or *character*. As remarked above, the Hebrew has no "present" tense; its absence is partly supplied by using the participle, and the participle is used when the writer wishes to emphasize the duration, or uninterrupted continuance of an event. If an action, to be described, belongs to past time, but the writer wishes to characterize it as *beginning* in this past time, or as *incomplete*, he will use the so-called *future* tense, because *incipient* and *incomplete* action can be expressed only by this tense, whether the action is in the realm of the past, of the present or of the future. And *vice versa*, if an action belongs to the future, but the writer wishes to contemplate it as *finished*, *complete*, he must, of necessity, use the so-called *past* tense, because a finished or completed action can be indicated in no other way. It will thus be seen that the idea of the tense in English and Hebrew is entirely different. In the former language, tense indicates order or date; in the latter, *only* kind or character. But how, you will ask, is the order or date to be determined? One surely must know the date of an action, or he will all the time work in confusion. True; and there is a method of determining the order, although not by the tense. It will be found that in nearly every case this information may be obtained from the *context*.

The statement given in this Note is but a brief and general one; there is a multitude of details which come up in the close study of the subject. Space remains only for a rapid glance at the texts cited above, in view of what has been said.

Those cases in which the so-called past tense is used, while the English translation is in the present or future, may be explained as follows:—

1) Ephron really says to Abraham *I have given thee*, meaning thereby that he promises to give; and, although the giving is yet to take place, it is so certain, "being regarded as dependent upon an unalterable determination of the will," that it may be and is spoken of as having actually taken place.

2) The same explanation holds good of Abraham's reply which would read literally *I have given thee*, but is equivalent to *I will surely give thee*.

3) The literal rendering *Naomi has sold a parcel of land* is seen from the context to mean nothing; it assumes a new significance when we translate it *Naomi has resolved to sell (will surely sell)*, the fact of her *determination* to do so being indicated by the use of the *past* tense.

4) The prophet in Isa. ix., 6, writes as if the Messianic dispensation had already come. Inspired from above he announces as *taken place*, that which is

yet to take place. He represents it as an event *completed, finished*, and so it is in the divine will. The use of the past tense thus, in prophecy, is most frequent.

5) The last case (Isa. xi., 9) is similar. The context points to the future. At the time described in the preceding verses no one shall hurt or destroy, because, at that time, as the prophet looks ahead and sees, the earth *has been filled* with the knowledge of Jehovah.

The so-called *past* tense of the Hebrew marks an action or event as, in the estimation of the writer or speaker, *finished*. A better term for it, and one quite commonly used is *Perfect*, in the sense of complete.

Now look at those cases in which the so-called *future* tense was used in the Hebrew, while our English translation uses the present or past :—

1) *But there went up a mist* (Gen. ii., 6) means that a mist went up *repeatedly*, from time to time; the idea would well be expressed by our phrase *used to go up*, the so-called future being used rather than the past, because the thought of *repetition* (incompleteness) was in his mind. The same explanation clears up the fourth and fifth cases cited: *when the sons of God were accustomed to go in* (Gen. vi., 4); *righteousness used to lodge in it* (Isa. i., 21).

2) If we substitute *then Moses began to sing* (Ex. xv., 1) for *then Moses sang*, we see the force of the tense, here denoting *incipiency*.

3) The Hebrew future, as we may recall, was said to indicate an action as unfinished, still going on. When an English speaker, in describing past events, desires to bring them vividly to the mind of his hearer, he uses the present (historical). By this means he places the event before the hearer as in the very act of taking place. To do this in Hebrew, the so-called future must be used. Keeping this in mind how much more significant is the expression *The depths cover them* (Ex. xv., 5), than would have been *The depths covered them*, the former portraying the event as directly before the eyes of the singers, the latter as a matter wholly in the past.

4) That man is *blessed* who is *accustomed to meditate* (Ps. i., 2), who keeps *meditating*, the so-called future being used as the tense which marks repetition, a form of incompleteness.

5) By rendering Ex. i., 12, *But the more they kept afflicting them, the more they kept multiplying and kept growing*, the verse takes on a new force, here again the future being used even of a past event because that event, though past, was contemplated as going on, incomplete. As the tense which marks completeness is termed by some the *Perfect*, so this one, marking incompleteness, is termed the *Imperfect*. These are but a few cases selected from many. Every chapter is full of verbal expressions, the close rendering of which is impossible in any language. There are shades of thought in nearly every verse which no translation can reproduce. They may be felt, but they cannot always be indicated. In prophecy and poetry is this especially the case.

It is proposed to take up in succeeding numbers of the STUDENT some of the Psalms, and, if possible, to point out some of these shades of thought. R.

The Sections in the Midrasch of Deuteronomy.*—The January STUDENT contained an interesting notice of *Der Midrasch Debarim Rabba*, by Prof. Charles R.

* Attention is called to the following correction in the notice, p. 174, line 5 from bottom: for "my son; וְלִי" that is;—"and rule over thy passion", read....my son וְלִי that is;—וְלִי" and rule over thy passion."